1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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by the fisherman, who dives down and pushes it into holes in the rocks. He then goes back to his canoe. In a short time there is an 'explosion' which stuns the fish; the small ones come to the surface, the large ones are dived for. I am not clear as to the exact nature of this 'explosion'. My informants said it was 'just like dynamite', with which some of them are familiar as it is used for killing fish by the planters, though there are government restrictions on its use by natives owing to the liability to accidents. I have not seen this plant used, but it seems clear from the description given that the fish are actually stunned or killed by the explosion, and not poisoned. Williams (1930, p. 58) reports among the Orokaiva the use of the vine *Anisi*, a species of derris, which goes by the name of 'New Guinea dynamite'. Unfortunately, the specimen of *tʃū* which I brought home was not adequate for identification, so I cannot say whether it is the same plant. Williams describes its action as poisoning. 'The root of the Anisi is pounded on a log. It exudes a highly poisonous milky fluid which permeates the water, and brings the fish stupefied to the surface.'

The actual poisoning of fish is also known to these people. They use the fruit of *wapatsun* (a large tree which grows on the shore) by pulping it on a stone and throwing it into the water. This does not explode, but poisons the fish, which then rise to the surface and are picked up.

The poisoning of fish is a very widespread practice among primitive peoples. Ivens describes a method of poisoning employed in the SE. Solomons involving a preparation of the bark of the Barringtonia tree 'heated in the fire to bring out its bitter qualities' (1927, p. 389). The kernel of the fruit of a species of Barringtonia is used for poisoning pools by the Samoans (Hiroa, 1930, p. 443), and the outer portion of the fruit of the same tree by the Fijians 'for stupefying fish for the purpose of catching them' (Maiden, 1889, p. 160, quoted from Seemann, *Flora Vitensis*). The plant called *wapatsun*, mentioned above, is not the ordinary Barringtonia, the kernels of which are eaten. This is called *karu* and is used for various medicinal purposes, but not, so far as I know, for catching fish. It may, however, be another species of Barringtonia.

11. *Drives.*

Under appropriate conditions, in places where there is a muddy shore, such as that in a bay near Novar, on the western end of Buka

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on the ground near the door of the man's hut at night. The man walks over it, then this man picks it up and puts it in the fire. Then the man dies, he has no sickness, he dies quickly. He does not lie down even for one day, he is not ill even for one night, he talks, he walks about, he is quite well, then he just dies, that 's all.' A death of this kind is called *wasō*.

A different method of 'making poison', obtained from another informant, runs as follows: 'Take the plant *korowin* (a shrub, unidentified) and burn the stem in the fire. Then put some of the buds up in the rafters of the man's house. As they dry, the man will waste away till he is nothing but skin and bone. When you want him to die, burn the buds. But if you are sorry for him by and by, and want him to get better, throw the buds away.'

In the nature of things, I could not verify or check these pieces of information, which were given to me in confidence, and it is not impossible that the vital part of the procedure was withheld; I give them, therefore, without guarantee, for what they may be worth.

In some cases it is supposed that actual poison is mixed with the food. Pinari, as *tsunaun tʃan* by right of inheritance, and paramount chief of the district by Government appointment, considers himself to be in very special danger of poison, of which he is obviously in great and constant dread. He told me that when he goes up into the mountainous hinterland he likes to eat only in one place, with a man whom he knows to be his friend. If this is impossible, he takes men with him who keep a sharp look-out and always eat with him. Another instance, said to have occurred shortly before my visit, was related to me. A man named Tatowan went to a neighbouring village, not too friendly to Kurtatchi, and ate some pig there. He returned home, but next day he died *wasō*. His death was said to have been caused by 'bad lime' given him at the meal.

The people say that a number of different kinds of leaves and roots that grow in the bush are used for 'making poison'. But no one would confess to knowing which they were or bring me any specimens, with the one exception noted in a previous paragraph. This behaviour was in marked contrast to the helpful interest they displayed in my investigations into plants used in making other kinds of 'medicine', for which they willingly scoured the bush. While it is possible that some of the plants may actually be poisonous, it is

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APPENDIX III

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Identification of some of the plants used for medical and magical purposes by the natives of Buka and North Bougainville[1]

Botanical name	*Native name*	*Portion used*	*Purpose*
Acanthaceae	*karawinoa*	leaves	in childbirth
Achryanthes aspera	*towano*	leaves	for a boil
		root	for swollen leg
Aspidum latifolium	*tshiriv*	leaves	for a boil
Barringtonia sp. (edulis?)	*karu*	bark	in childbirth
		"	in fishing magic
Bidens pilosa	*rahot*	root	stomach-ache
		leaves	taro magic
		"	love magic
Biophytum cumingianum	*otoa gūrus bai'i*	whole plant	magic to make child go to sleep
Calamus sp.	*gartan*	root	constipation
		"	fishing magic
		leaves	headache
Calophyllum sp. (Inophyllum?)	*tui*	root	septic sore
		bark	rain magic
Canarium commune	*tinoa*	bark	pain in back
			bad sore
			fishing magic
Caryota sp.	*kat fian*	bark	yaws
		fruit	hunting magic
		root	taro magic
		root and leaves	fishing magic
Codiaeum variegatum (croton)	*takuruts*	root	septic sore
Codiaeum variegatum (croton)	*sisiv*	root	love magic
		leaves	rain magic
Coleus Blumei var.	*iag*	leaves	magic to prevent sunstroke
		"	used at betrothal
Coleus sp.	*munti*	root	cramp in leg
		leaves	magic to induce sleep
Cordyline ferrea	*ariko*	root	constipation
Cordyline terminalis	*ta'un*	leaves	feverish headache
		"	in menstruation ceremony

[1] For the majority of the identifications I am indebted to the authorities at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

[p.592]

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Botanical name	*Native name*	*Portion used*	*Purpose*
Cordyline terminalis	*ta'un*	leaves	at funeral rites
		„	for rain magic
		„	many other magical purposes
Crinum asiaticum	*bariw*	root	in childbirth
		„	coco-nut magic
		„	fishing magic
Cycas sp.	*kiki'it*	midrib of leaf	to make mourning belts
Cymbopogon sp.	*mamini*	leaves	for blood in urine
		root	fishing magic
Desmodium adhaerens	*roobi*	leaves	for sickly child
		„	stomach-ache
Desmodium adhaerens	*rarakot*	leaves and root	fishing magic
Digitaria pruriens	*waras*	whole plant	to make child grow
Dryopteris milnesna or truncata	*papuna*	leaves	for a boil
		root	for wound made by embedded arrow
Dryopteris mollis	*tomtom*	leaves	to make child grow
Dryopteris pteroides	*ga-gi*	leaves and root	protection against sickness
Eleusine indica	*bakbak*	whole plant	to make child grow
Eragrostis tenella	*kokai*	whole plant	for scabies
Eranthemum Whartonianum	*harmoinoa*	root	for indigestion
		„	to remove object stuck in throat
Eranthemum sp.	*buruti*	young leaves	for yaws
Erythrina indica	*mamiwi*	leaves	in childbirth
		bark	for broken bone
Euphorbia stoto	*potsig*	root	fishing magic
Euphorbia hirta	*rip*	flowers	cure for barrenness
Evodia hortensis	*owen, panum*	whole plant	to protect against *wau*
Fleurya aestuans	*marihaun*	skin of stem and root	for sore on sole of foot
Fleurya interrupta	*holwaha*	flowers	for sore on sole of foot
		leaves	at puberty rites
Ipomoea biloba	*aimain*	leaves	for digestive troubles
		„	to make pig grow
Justicia sp.	*tegumumi*	leaves	for strain or sprain
		„	for septic sore
		„	child's disease
		„	for stomach-ache
		„	for a boil
		„	to make child grow
Lens sp.	*bi*	leaves	for pain in breast after suckling

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Botanical name	*Native name*	*Portion used*	*Purpose*
Leptaspis Bankaii	*mwaai*	root and flowers	fighting magic
Licuala	*sin*	root	contraceptive
Lygodium dichotomum Sw.	*asam*	root	contraceptive
		lower end of stem	to strengthen sickly child
Mallotus sp.	*haholon* (Petats dialect)	root	contraceptive
Malvaceae (hibiscus)	*obŏb*	leaves and root	cough, and sore throat
		leaves	child's fever
Menispermaceae	*tatsir*	root	to control menstruation
Mollugo stricta	*kokui*	whole plant	to make smoke to keep off mosquitoes
Morinda citrifolia	*rivo*	bark	in childbirth
		leaves	dysentery
		leaves and root	fishing magic
Ocimum Basilicum	*mazri*	leaves	rain magic
Oldenlandia paniculata	*rakot*	leaves	for a burn
Ophiorrhiza rupestris	*tuntun*	whole plant	love magic
Paspalum conjugatum	*wanis*	root	for sore throat
		sap	for stomach-ache
Pennisetum macrostachyum	*pai'uhes*	root	to make sea smooth
Phyllanthus Niruri	*tsmargin*	leaves	for pain in chest
Physalis angulata	*tot fapŏ*	seeds	cure for barrenness
Piper betel	*nik, panak*	leaf-bud	love magic
Piper sp.	*manisian*	leaves and root	headache and internal pain
		leaves	for a boil
		leaves and root	to relieve extreme pain
Pteris ensiformis	*sip-sip*	root	to control menstruation
Pteris tripartita Sw.	*pupuna*	leaves	in childbirth
Roxburghia sp.	*bakil*	leaves	for a boil
Rubiaceae	*haveninoa*	leaves and root	fishing magic
		branch	to keep away *war*
Rutaceae	*harŏb*	leaves	to cause abortion
Scleria lithosperma	*hakku*	grass	for fever
Selaginella flabellata Spring	*hakaviuh*	leaves	for feverish headache
		root	to control menstruation
Terminalia Catappa	*kort*	bark	for a sore
		leaves	for yaws
Vitex Lagundi	*paparau*	root	contraceptive
Wedelia biflora	*wiokun*	leaves	for a spear or arrow wound

4: Thomas U-5 (no date) 1931 ON6 Buka ON6
Pororan

Each village has, amongst its older men and women, some with a very fair knowledge of native medicines and also, unfortunately, one or two with a secret knowledge of poisons. The administration of curative and prophylactic medicines is usually accompanied by elaborate rites which the patient must rigidly observe. Contraceptives are commonly used by the women and one herb is claimed to be what might be termed a "contra-contraceptive," *i.e.*, after a woman has been barren for several years, as a result of taking a contraceptive, this herb will make her fertile again. When epidemics occur villages as yet untouched will place small sticks, leaning outwards, on the various roads to ward off the arrival of the spirit of sickness. The sticks are smeared with the spittle of betel-nut, pepper and lime. If the cry of a certain night-bird is heard over a village where a patient lies dangerously ill, it is usual then for any further attempt to combat the illness to cease. Death has spoken. The bird's call is looked upon as the inevitable token of death, and the relations commence to gather together their presents for the dead in readiness for throwing them into the coffin or grave. It is strange, but the cases where to my own knowledge the bird's call has actually preceded the death of a patient have been numerous.

DRUM SIGNALLING ON PORORAN ISLAND

Pororan legend has it that in the days of long ago (*manus*) before drum signalling had been introduced a strange resonant noise was heard coming from the bush by the men of the village one evening. Half fearful investigations were made and it was found that the noise came from a swinging branch beaten by the wind upon a hollow tree. From this sprang the idea of the *tui*, or wooden drum, which is used so extensively throughout Buka, Bougainville and other Melanesian islands.

The making of these drums in the early days, before steel implements were introduced, was a long, tedious and almost sacred performance. In many of the *tui* the aperture at the top is but an inch to an inch and a half in width extending the full length of the drum, while the outer circumference measures in many cases as much as eight feet six inches. Sharpened clam-shells, fastened to spear hafts or long sticks were the only tools used for the work.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
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against him. But, as will be seen, there are certain conditions for which what we might term natural causes are regarded as sufficient explanation. In either case, whatever is done to combat the disease is looked upon as entirely comparable to the procedure employed to ensure success in procuring food or in making love. Any substance—usually, but not always, some portion of a plant—employed in either connexion is known as *ăto*, which, in accordance with what I believe to be the native point of view, I have uniformly translated "medicine." Anyone who knows the appropriate medicine may treat a patient. The "prescriptions" are usually learned from a near relative: father, mother or mother's brother. This knowledge is not necessarily, though it may be, possessed by individuals who are skilled in "making medicine" for other purposes.

Fractures and Sprains

A sprain or a strained muscle is described by the same term as a fracture (*takok* = broken). I met one man (at Petats, an islet off the west coast of Buka) and three women (at Kurtatchi) who were known for their skill in such cases. They treated patients of both sexes, except persons to whom they stood in certain taboo relationships which prohibited physical contact. The following procedure is typical:

Ketar, a young woman, strained her shoulder by carrying too heavy a load of taro. I watched her being treated by Pari, an elderly woman, who subsequently gave me details of the secret mixture she used, asking me not to tell any of the other natives. This mixture (*rŏm*) consisted of the pulped roots of a plant called *tongnamani* (*Justicia* sp.) mixed with a quantity of *oin* (a red powder, a variety of iron oxide, much used in this region for various magical purposes) and stirred into sea water. Pari has taught the secret to her sister's son, together with the method of using the mixture. At Tabut the root of *namŏmŏ* (*Erythrina*, the "coral tree") is used in the same manner. When it was ready she took up her lime pot and, putting it close to her mouth, called softly, many times, "Pispoa, Pispoa, Pispoa." Pispoa is the name of the spirit of a man who, when he was alive, was successful with this treatment. Pispoa then came and

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
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picks up rapidly when the lesions have healed. Its appearance is expected and marks the end of the period of taboo on cohabitation following childbirth. Various methods of treatment are in use. The young leaves of *burustē* (*Eranthemum* sp.) are rubbed over the child's skin; they must afterwards be thrown away. Scrapings from the bark from the trunk of *katsian*, a wild species of areca-palm, are boiled with scraped coconut meat and given to the child to eat. A bundle of leaves of *kort* (*Terminalia catappa*, the Indian almond) is heated in the embers and laid on the sores. [These leaves contain tannin. In India " the juice of young leaves is employed to prepare an ointment for scabies, leprosy and other cutaneous diseases " (Nāḍkarṇi, p. 843).]

I saw no adult with the ordinary form of yaws, but adults frequently suffer from sores on the sole of the foot (*tōkapits*), which correspond to the descriptions given in medical treatises of " crab-yaws," a secondary lesion. They cause great pain on walking. One man would sometimes hobble round the village howling. He used to collect the hard dry mud from the nest of a species of ant, crumble it into half a coconut shell, add some smouldering embers, and blow on it till it smoked. Then he covered it up with the upper half of the coconut shell, in which one of the " eyes " had been pierced, so that the smoke from the smouldering mixture came out of the hole. He held his foot in the smoke as long as he could bear it and said that it gave him considerable relief. Another method of treatment is to soak the flowers of *bubuwiar* (a variety of nettle, *Fleurya interrupta*) in sea water, add powdered lime, and rub this mixture into the sore.

Tropical ringworm (*Tinia imbricata*, native name *ukisas*) is very prevalent. It is not considered a disease, no cause is known for it, and no remedies are used. The natives say that it does not hurt and that they do not take any notice of it, but they pick at the scales a good deal. A healthy person will pick scales from the skin of an infected one, apparently as a way of passing the time. Some people seemed to regard the patterns made by the scaly patches on the skin as an ornament.

Scabies (itch, native name *kuskus*). Nearly every adult carries the lesions characteristic of this disease, some being almost entirely covered by them.

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757 almost entirely covered by them. It is disliked and several methods of treating it are practised. The usual method is to
● [278] boil certain leaves, among them *kokui* (*Eragrostis tenella*) and *rarakot* (*Desmodium adhaerens*), to which must be added some bark and some scraped coconut meat; the resulting mash must be eaten by the patient, who then rubs his hand, greasy from carrying the mixture to his mouth, over the sores.

752 Ulcers and septic sores (generic word *pi*) are very common.
278 The smallest lesion of the skin is almost certain to become in-
[164] fected. They say that the sap of *wirtsun* (the inedible bush banana), if rubbed in at once, will prevent a cut from becoming a sore, but if the cut is deep this is not done, because it is too painful! The most general form of treatment is to chew the leaves or root of certain plants with the betel-mixture (arecanut, lime and betel-pepper, as chewed for pleasure) and spit the resulting mash on to the sore. Among the medicines used in this manner are the root of *takuruts*, a species of Croton (*Codiaeum variegatum*), and the root of *tui* (*Calophyllum* sp.). Sometimes heated leaves, sprinkled with lime, are rubbed over the sore, or their sap is squeezed on to it. The bundle of leaves must then be put up in the rafters. As it dries in the smoke of the fire below, the sore will dry up; if it is thrown away before healing is complete, the sore will break out again. Of several plants thus used, only one is identifiable, *sipsip* (*Pteris ensiformis Burm.*). The bark of the Indian almond (*Terminalia catappa*), stated by Dymock (p. 262) to possess astringent qualities, may be pounded in sea water and squeezed on to the sore. The sap from the leaves of *wuruts*, the native tobacco plant, is sometimes squeezed over a sore to keep the flies away from it.

Boils (*tsub*, *patsuk*) are supposed to be caused by the blood stopping in the skin. They are treated by applying hot leaves, by pressure, and by spitting over the affected area a mash made by chewing portions of various plants with the betel-mixture.
[171] Among the plants thus used are *towano* (*Achryanthes aspera*), which is used in Australia (Maiden, p. 150) and in India (Dymock, p. 538) for treating cutaneous diseases, and *mansisian*, a species of betel-pepper. The leaves of betel-pepper are used in India "as a ready dressing for foul ulcers, which seem to im-

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
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prove under them" (Dymock, p. 600, quoting from Dutt's *Hindu Materia Medica*). 752 278

For burns, the leaves of *rakot* (*Oldenlandia paniculata*) are squeezed between the hands and the juice allowed to drop on to the burnt skin. The burn may also be painted with *oin*, and I have seen sea water poured over it.

Warts (*pisis*) are attributed to the fact that one of the food taboos has been broken. A small boy who was badly affected was said to have brought them on himself by eating sugar-cane, which is taboo to little children. Nothing is done for them. 753

Two prescriptions in my list apply to spear or arrow wounds. The bruised leaves of *wiakun* (*Wedelia biflora*) are heated, and the sap squeezed on to the wound "to make it heal quickly." If the head of the arrow remains embedded, the roots of *pupuna* (*Dryopteris Milneana* or *truncata*) are chewed with the betel-mixture and the saliva spat on to the wound. They say that this makes the arrow-head go further in so that the wound will heal over it, that its presence does no harm, and that healing is painless. 752 273

Affections of the Internal Organs

Next to those dealing with skin diseases, the largest number of prescriptions in my collection concerns various conditions which appear to be disturbances of the digestive system, though the descriptions are often so vague that it is difficult to be sure exactly what is meant. 757

"If a person has eaten something bad" he is given the scraped root of *wakop* chewed with the betel-mixture. Swallowing this is said to induce vomiting. An emetic prepared in the same manner from the root of *wamut* is given for stomach-ache. Unfortunately, neither of these trees could be identified, but I have included them as evidence that the use of the emetic is known to these natives.

Indigestion is attributed to eating too much or unsuitable food. Certain articles of food are avoided by some individuals for this reason, even, occasionally, their greatest delicacy, pig's fat. A pain "running from side to side" is said to be caused by eating hot taro at the same time as cold taro. Often no treatment is [753]

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
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757 given and "by and bye the pain goes away." "*Komanē to kamits non*" ("My belly hurts") is a complaint frequently heard. The following methods of treatment are typical of their class:

757 "Make a bundle of the leaves of *mansisian* (a wild pepper, not ● 278 that commonly chewed with areca-nut) and heat it in the fire. Make a little hole in the bottom of the bundle and blow through the bundle on to the place where the pain is. Then chew the root with the betel-mixture, undo the bundle, spit the chewed mass into it, wrap it up again and rub the patient's belly."

"Chew the roots of *karawinoa* (*Eranthemum whartonianum*) with the betel-mixture and spit on to the patient's belly. Put the chewed mass up in the rafters of the hut and leave it there. If you throw it away the pain will come back."

"Rub between your hands the leaves of *tengnamani* (*Justicia* sp.), add lime, and make them into a bundle. Heat this on the fire, but do not leave it there too long. Undo it, and with the leaves in your hands rub the belly, pushing downwards. Then do the leaves up into a bundle again and put it in the smoke in the rafters. As it dries, the pain will be eased."

[164 753] Constipation (*watob*) is very prevalent. No cause is known for it, but it does not seem to be ascribed to "poison." Most of the prescriptions involve the massaging of the patient's abdomen, "to send the faeces down and make them come out." Medicine is also given by the mouth, either as a mash chewed with betel-mixture or as a drink. The following is interesting as showing that these people are acquainted with the principle of the suppository: "Chew the roots of *gartan* (a species of Calamus) with the betel-mixture, spit the mash on to your hand and push some of it up into the patient's bowel. Chew another mouthful, spit it out, and put it into half a coconut shell. Pour some water over it and keep it in the house. If it is thrown away the medicine will not act."

[753 164] Diarrhoea (*tasohokoman*) is also common, and is ascribed to the eating of too much fat or greasy food. The remedies are usually leaves and roots chewed with the betel-mixture and swallowed by the patient. Massage with the chewed root of *wiakun* (*Wedelia biflora*) is also recommended.

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Dysentery (*tasoa*) is regarded as the result of " poison." It is diagnosed by the presence of blood in the faeces. It appears often in a mild form, from which the patient generally recovers. In the early stages it is treated with *wiakun* in the same way as diarrhoea. In severe cases, a drink is given, consisting of the bruised leaves of *riro* (*Morinda citrifolia*) steeped in water mixed with powdered lime. The leaves of this plant are used medicinally in Fiji (Seemann, p. 129). In India a decoction is made of them for the treatment of diarrhoea, and they are also administered as a tonic and febrifuge (Dymock, p. 335).

The passing of blood with the urine is treated in the following manner: " Rub a quantity of the grass *manini* (a sweet-scented grass, *Cymbopogon* sp.) between your hands, mix it with water, then take out the grass and give the water to the patient to drink. Then chew the roots with the betel-mixture and massage the lower part of the patient's abdomen vigorously with the resulting mash in the palm of your hand. The patient must also chew some of the root with the betel-mixture and swallow it."

Fever

There is a good deal of fever, chiefly malaria. It is usually considered to be caused by getting wet and cold, and only very rarely connected with black magic. Both external and internal treatment is given. Typical prescriptions run as follows:

The leaves of *toankenon* (one of the *Rutaceae*) or of several other plants are rubbed between the hands and placed in half a coconut shell filled with water, to which hot stones have been added. The top half of the coconut is replaced, with an " eye " pierced through which the steam will escape. The patient must hold his face in the steam and sniff at it.

When the fever is only just beginning, some freshly picked leaves of any one of various aromatic plants (unidentified) are rubbed in the hands and held to the nose of the patient, who must sniff at them. For later stages of the fever a package must be made of the leaves, heated in the fire, and then unfastened and held to the patient's nose; the leaves, held in the clenched fist, must then be pressed firmly on the patient's head in different places.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
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757 For internal use, a decoction is prepared by steeping certain
● [278] leaves in water, which is then drunk by the patient. Only one of several plants named in this connexion could be identified, *kabku* (*Scleria lithosperma*).

Children's Diseases

They fear very much for their children a sickness called *mēmim*, in which a thick yellow coating appears on the tongue
[753] which may choke the child. It is thought to be caused by someone who wishes to injure the child's parents, out of jealousy or other cause, making "bad medicine" to bring about the child's death. For treatment, certain leaves are rubbed between the hands and steeped in water to make a drink. Six different plants were named, none of which could be identified from my pressed specimens.

[753] Another affection peculiar to children is called *bin*. It reduces the child to skin and bone. It is supposed to occur when the child's mother has failed to observe the food taboos appropriate
[278] to the period of lactation. To treat it, scrapings of the bark of a mango tree (*bē*) are mixed with lime in a little water and rubbed on the child's abdomen.

[753] Failure on the part of the mother to keep the food taboos may also result in the child getting the sickness *kabets*, which is thus described: "It fastens the child's neck, and then goes into
[828] his belly and makes him die." (The word here translated "die" is used of temporary unconsciousness as well as of actual death, it being thought that the person dies and comes back to life again when he recovers consciousness. Wailing begins as if for the dead, to cease abruptly when the patient comes round.) A child whom I saw, said to be suffering from *kabets*, had convulsions. His grandmother massaged his body with a yellow liquid made by soaking in water the bruised leaves of the tree *papets* (unidentified). As she continually dipped her hands covered with powdered lime into the bowl, its contents gradually thickened. She called my attention to this, saying it was the sickness coming out of him.

757 When a child's head is hot with fever it is washed with water
278 in which the leaves of *obōb* (Hibiscus) have been soaking.

5: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930)1935
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A child who is always ailing is thought to be strengthened by being rubbed all over with water containing the leaves of *roabi* (*Desmodium adharens*). 757 278

Local Pain

A very general complaint is of "pains in the skin," which seem to be of a rheumatic nature. They are treated by tying a piece of fibre tightly round the place where the pain is greatest, and by rubbing the skin over the site of the pain with a mash made by chewing the leaves, roots or bark of any one of a number of specified trees or plants (all unidentified).

For pain in the back the bark of *winoa* (Canarium almond) is scraped, mixed thoroughly with hot water, and rubbed on the back. The bark of this tree exudes a resinous gum which is stated by Nādkarṇi (p. 153) to be stimulant and rubefacient. It may therefore be of use in this connexion as a counter-irritant.

Headaches are frequent, especially a pain between the eyes (*werwios*), which is attributed to the sun burning the eyes. As a rule, the sufferer first binds a piece of fibre tightly round his head. He may then hold his head over the smoke of *garian* (*Calamus* sp.) leaves mixed with powdered lime, or pour over his head water in which the leaves of *kahariuk* (*Selaginella flabellata*) are soaking, or rub his forehead with a bundle of the leaves of *mamirian* (*Piper* sp.) into which a little lime has been sprinkled. The crushed leaves of another variety of *Selaginella* (*S. imbricata*) are used in India as a local application to the head for the relief of headache (Nādkarṇi, p. 237) and the leaves of a species of *Piper* "are applied to the temples in headache for relieving pain" (Dymock, p. 600, quoting from Dutt's *Hindu Materia Medica*). [153] [164]

In some of the prescriptions it is necessary to collect the leaves after treatment and hang them up in the rafters. As they dry, the pain will disappear. When the cure is complete, the leaves are thrown away into the sea. 755

Ear Troubles

The usual treatment for earache is to take the leaves and root of the plant *tagava* (unidentified), rub them to a pulp, and put this into the ear. 757

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752 For an insect in the ear the root and stem-sheath of *gartan* (*Calamus* sp.) are chewed with *wiwi*, a small variety of areca-nut, and *tsutsun*, the leaf of a wild pepper. The mixture is made into a bundle, wrapped up in *gartan* leaves and pushed into the ear, and is supposed to make the insect come out. The prescription ends: "Then you must catch it and show it to everybody."

Toothache

757 The roots of certain plants (unidentified) are chewed with the betel-mixture and the resulting mash is pressed against the aching tooth. These people seem to suffer a good deal from toothache, and many, even when quite young, lose teeth through disease.

Throat Troubles

757 278 For sore throat, the root of *wanis* (*Paspalum conjugatum*) is chewed with the betel-mixture and the mash given to the patient to swallow, or the leaf of *obōb* (Hibiscus) may be steeped in water to make a drink. For external use, the leaves of *tengnamani* (*Justicia* sp.) are made into a bundle, heated, and soaked in water. The patient drinks the water and the hot, wet leaves are rubbed on his throat.

If an object, such as a fish-bone, sticks in the throat, it is pushed down by massaging the outside of the throat with a mash made by chewing scrapings from the root of *karawinoa* (*Eranthemum whartonianum*). To ease the soreness, the patient swallows a lump of the already chewed mash.

For a cough, the patient is given a drink made by soaking in water the bruised leaves of any one of a number of different plants. The only identifiable specimen is Hibiscus, the leaves of which are mucilaginous (Maiden, p. 132), so the decoction may actually have a soothing effect.

Swellings

For a swelling behind the ear, take the leaves of *drangi*, hold them in the smoke, then press them hard against the swollen part. This will cause the swelling to go down. To send it to another person, get more leaves of the same plant and throw them in his direction: the swelling will go to him and you will be free from it.

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A swollen leg is rubbed with the chewed root of *towano* (*Achryanthes aspera*). This plant is reported by Maiden (p. 150) to be "administered in India in cases of dropsy." A condition which I take to be dropsy was thus described: "Suppose someone puts a certain bad leaf (the name of which my informant professed not to know) among some bananas and another person eats them, his belly becomes big just like a pregnant woman's and presently he dies." The word for this condition (*wagiug*) also means "pregnant."

Elephantiasis (*pu*) is not infrequent. There is medicine to relieve the pain in the early stages, but my informants did not know it. Afterwards "it is not painful, it only swells up and then we cannot make any medicine for it."

Epilepsy

I heard of one man who was subject to periodical attacks which would seem to be epileptic fits. They were described as follows: "He falls down on the ground, all his skin is tight, then he dies (*i.e.* becomes unconscious), plenty of white water comes up in his mouth. When he comes to life again he spits it out, he stays all right for a long time, then the sickness comes back again." The treatment is to make a mixture of the leaves of *karawetan* (a creeper) with lime and water. The leaves are rubbed over the man's body and he is given the water to drink.

Tuberculosis

The sickness *wapē'o*, which I take to be tuberculosis of the lung, is thus described: "The man is nothing but skin and bone, he cannot eat, he does nothing but spit, by and bye he spits blood, then he is all right for a little while, then he is ill again." It is thought to be caused by someone making "bad medicine" with the aid of aromatic plants or leaves which have been worn by the affected individual as ornaments. My informant had heard there was a treatment for it, but he did not know it.

Prevention of Sickness

Epidemics are thought to be caused by *urar* (spirits of the dead) who are angry with the people. Certain precautionary measures may be taken. The medicine used generally consists

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The Medicine used generally consists

751 of a mixture of dried leaves, roots, etc. with the red powder
278 called *oin* (iron oxide). Packages of this "medicine" are highly valued; not infrequently they have been obtained from the natives of another district and their owners are ignorant of the ingredients used. One such, in my collection, is intended to be rubbed over a person's eyes when he has to walk about at night; this is thought to prevent the *urar* from giving you the disease. Another method is to make a drink from the leaves of *gagē* (*Dryopteris pteroidea*); this must be used frequently throughout the time of sickness.

Convalescence

758 When a person is recovering after an illness, and is very thin
278 and wasted, the leaves of *bubus*, squeezed into water to make a drink, are given to help him to "get fat quickly." There are also special leaves to be dipped in water and used to rub him down.

Miscellaneous

752 For the bite of a centipede, chew the root of *wapindi* (a tree)
278 and with your mouth full bite at the place. Sprinkle lime on the leaves and press them on the joints at either side of the bite (*e.g.* if bitten on the forearm, press on the elbow and wrist). For the wound made by a sting-ray, rub the leaves on the place.

751 To prevent sunstroke, while working in the taro garden, take
[824] the leaves of *iag* (*Coleus Blumei var.*), put them in half a coconut shell, fill it with water, and leave it lying in the sun. When you have finished working you must pour the contents of the coconut shell into the fire. To leave it where it is, or to empty it on the ground, will cause rain.

Summary

757 It will be seen that the natives of north Bougainville practise a variety of curative methods, their technique including the giving of medicine by the mouth; its application externally as we use ointment; the use of a suppository; the use of emetics; the application of counter-irritants: the application of heat in a form comparable to our poultice, and also of smoke; inhaling steam; sniffing aromatic plants; massage, manipulation and pressure. No treatment involving bleeding came to my notice. So far as I could ascertain they do not practise any form of surgery.